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St. Paul's Behaviour towards
the Civil Magistrate :

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S E R M O N

PREACH'D at the

Affizes at *HERTFORD*,

JULY the 26th, 1708.

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Publish'd at the Request of the High-Sheriff, and
Grand-Jury.

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T O

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Gentlemen of the Grand-Jury,

*This Sermon, Publish'd at their Request, is
most humbly Dedicated.*

A C T S xxii. 25.

And as they bound him with Thongs, Paul said unto the Centurion that stood by, Is it lawful for you to scourge a Man that is a Roman, and Uncondemn'd ?

IT being my Design to speak something at this time concerning the nature of *Laws*, and the great advantage of them to the well-being of *Humane Society*, I think it not improper to found what I have to say upon the Behaviour of *St. Paul*, as it is recorded in the *Acts* of the *Apostles*, with respect to his *Civil Privileges*, and to his *Civil Superiors*, and *Judges*. And I chuse to do so, because this will at once give us some light into the true interpretation of the *Doctrine*, deliver'd by *Himself* and *others* in the *New Testament*, concerning *Government*; and lead us into some useful *Observations* relating to the Happiness of *Humane Society*.

I. I propose to give you a brief view of the Behaviour of *St. Paul*, as it is recorded in the *Acts* of the *Apostles*, with respect to those *Civil Rights*, and *Privileges*, to which the *Laws* of the *Roman*, or *Jewish State* entitled Him; and to those *Civil Magistrates*, and *Judges*, before whom He had occasion to appear. And,

1. In the *Chapter* now before us, the *Chief Captain*, who appears to have acted the part of a *Civil Magistrate* as well as of a *Commanding Officer* in *Jerusalem*, resolving to find out what it was that had so much incens'd the whole Multitude against *St. Paul*, commanded him to be scourged, in order to his own confession of his Crime. *St. Paul* could have born this usage with as great *Christian Patience*, and *Roman Fortitude*, as any Man living: and no Man knew the true Glory of suffering wrongfully better than *He*. But instead of this, He seems to think

it a much more becoming part to insist upon those *Civil Privileges* which the *Laws* of the *State* entitled him to, as He was free of the *City of Rome*. *Is it lawful for you to scourge a Man that is a Roman, and Uncondemn'd?* was the *Question* which He thought fit at this time to ask. If a certain set of *Notions* had been embrac'd in those Days, some of his *Fellow-Christians* might perhaps have inform'd Him that the *Laws* were but a *dead Letter*; that what the *Executive Power* ordain'd was *Law*, tho' contrary to all the *Laws* then in force; that He who was but a *Subject* was no proper Judge of his own *Rights*, and ought not to give so ill a *Precedent* to other *Subjects* as might encourage them to dare to judge when their *Privileges* were invaded; and much more, that He being a *Christian*, and an *Apostle*, a Follower of a Crucified Master, and a Preacher of the Doctrine of the *Cross*, ought not to shew any concern about worldly *Rights* and *Privileges*; but think it a *Glory* rather to give them up to the *Invasion* of his *Superiors*. Thus I say might some *Christians* have taught St. Paul to have behav'd himself. But He, we find, was of another opinion; and had very differing Sentiments concerning these matters. He thought it no Argument of a *Christian Spirit* to suffer any thing which He could honourably avoid; and He thought it honourable to plead the *Privileges* of a *Subject* against the *Encroachments* of the *Higher Powers*: and so He appeals to the *Laws*, and claims the *Right* of being us'd by the *Executive Power* no otherwise than as they direct.

2. If we follow him a little farther, we shall find Him in the next Chapter brought, by order of the same Chief Captain, before the Chief Priests, and Council of the Jews, to see how He could acquit himself to them. Upon his declaring his Sincerity, and Uprightness, the High-Priest Ananias commanded them that stood by, to smite him on the Mouth. St. Paul's Reply was very severe, *God shall smite thee, thou whited Wall: For sittest thou there to judge me after the Law, and commandest me to be smitten contrary to the Law?* v. 3. And tho' He afterwards repented him of the reproachful Word he gave the High-Priest in his anger,

anger, yet he repented not of the just sense he had of the illegal indignity offer'd him; or of his Zeal against all such *Magistrates* as acted against the *End* of their *Office*, and against those *Laws* by which they ought to be govern'd in the *Execution* of it. Here again it is evident that this great *Apostle* had the *Spirit of Liberty* in him; and thought that those *Laws* which were made for the *Security* and *Guard* of it, were not to be dispens'd with at the pleasure of those whose *Business* it was to execute them. Here again we find him pretending to know, and judge of, his own *Civil Privileges*; and not tamely submitting to the *Violation* of them. If some *Christians* of later *Ages* had liv'd in his time, and been *Witnesses* of this, they would not only have said, *Re-vilest thou God's High-Priest?* but would have ask'd him, how He, being a *Subject*, and a *Christian*, could answer to his own *Conscience* his thinking any *Subjects* fit *Judges* of the *Invasion* of their own *Privileges*; they would have reprehended him severely for placing himself above his *Judges*, and turning the *World* upside down; for making *Subjects* *Rulers*, and *Rulers* *Subjects*, as they love to speak, by this preposterous way of pleading his *Privileges*, even whilst He stood before a *Court of Judicature*. But it is very plain, that as no *Man* was more zealous for the *Honour* and *Veneration* of such *Magistrates* as answer the *Ends* of their *Office*, which is the *Support* of *Humane Society*; so no *Man* could express a more hearty dislike of those who acted a contrary part; or a greater Concern for the *Temporal* good *Estate* of *Subjects*, even amidst his continual *Labours* and *Cares* for the eternal *Happiness* of all *Men*. Once more,

3. If we look back as far as the 16th *Chapter*, we shall find a yet greater *Proof* of this. The *Magistrates* of *Philippi* commanded *Paul* and *Silas* to be beaten with many *Stripes*, and cast into *Prison*, v. 23. but the next *Morning*, sent to the *Keeper* of the *Prison* to let them go, v. 35. *St. Paul's* Answer is very observable, *They have beaten us openly uncondemn'd, being Romans, and have cast us into Prison: And now do they thrust us out privily? Nay, verily, but let them come themselves and fetch us out.* He was just

now deliver'd out of Prison by a wonderful shock of the Earth about it; and so might have escaped before this Release was brought from the *Magistrates*: But after such a good natur'd Message from them, one would think, He might have quietly departed. It would have been but the Compliance of a *Subject* with a lawful Request of his *Superiors*. Yet this great *Apostle* did not think it honourable to go away without expressing some Resentment against the Invasion of the *Privileges* of the *Subject* which the *Magistrates* had been guilty of; and without pleading the *Cause* of *Injur'd Inferiors*. He continues resolute till these *Magistrates* themselves had waited upon him, and desir'd him to depart out of the City, v. 39. And here again, How would some, who pretend to found their Notions of these matters upon this very *Apostle*, have reprehended any other Man in the same Circumstances? Answerest thou the *Vicegerents* of God so? Where is the profound Respect due to that *Order* instituted by God himself? Where is the sense of the Duty of *Subjects*? Nay, where is *Government* it self, if *Subjects* may be allow'd to judge of the Invasion of their own *Privileges*; and if *Laws* must be placed above the Determinations of the *Executive Power*? But above all, where can there be a stop, when Obedience is refus'd to a lawful injunction of the *Magistrate*, and to what might without Sin be comply'd with? Whom therefore shall we follow? Those who speak after this manner? Or St. Paul, who knew as well as they the Duty owing to *Magistrates*, and yet gave not up his own Judgment to them: But, tho' a *Subject*, and acting the part of a *Subject*, took upon him (by what these Persons might perhaps call a stubborn Behaviour) to bring the *Magistrates* themselves to a sense of that Invasion they had made upon the *Rights* and *Privileges* of *Roman Subjects*; and this, tho' the *Invasion* appears to have been made merely thro' an hasty mistake. Of so great consequence did He think it to oppose one single instance of *illegal Oppression*!

Thus have I given you a true Account of the most remarkable *Passages* recorded concerning St. Paul's Behaviour with respect to his *Civil Privileges*, and to those *Ma-*
gistrates

gistrates before whom he had occasion to appear. If any one say, all this relates only to *Deputed* or *Inferior Magistrates*, not to the *Supreme*; I answer that it cannot relate to one without relating to the other, because *Government* cannot be manag'd in the World but by *Deputed* and *Inferior Officers*; because if every one of *Them* may be thus us'd by *Subjects* in any *Case*, it is to little purpose to exempt the *Supreme* from the like usages, since the same sort of Disturbances, and evil Consequences will follow, as if the *Supreme* might be treated after the same manner; because the *Christian Religion* (as *S. Peter* testifieth) commands the Obedience requir'd in it, with respect to both; because otherwise the Argument urg'd by some for the *Magistrate's* uncontrollable *Authority* drawn from our *Lord's* acknowledging the *Power of Pilate* to be from above, who was but a *Deputed Governour*, must fall to the Ground; because both *Supreme* and *Inferior* are said to act as one *Authority*, by the same *Divine Commission*; and so are equally born out by it against all opposition, or at least equally elevated above all pretenses of *Subjects* to judge concerning their Conduct: and because the *Subjects* Duty is equally to both *Submission*, and *Non-resistance*; the *Authority* of both being ultimately resolv'd into the *Divine Commission*, and it being as impossible to oppose, in any instance, the lowest Officer in Authority, without opposing the *Supreme*, as it is said to be, to oppose the *Supreme* without opposing *God* himself, whose *Vice-gerent* he is. I proceed, in the second place,

II. To consider if this *Account* of *St. Paul's Behavior* will not give us light into the true Interpretation of the *Doctrine* deliver'd by *Himself*, and others, in the *New Testament*, concerning *Government*; and lead us to some Observations of Importance to *Govern'd Societies*, and to that in particular to which we belong. For can any one think that these *Passages* were recorded for nothing, but to serve for an *Embellishment* of *St. Paul's Story*? Or can any one think that *St. Paul* had a regard to his own particular worldly Interest in these parts of his Conduct? He that had suffer'd, and knew he was to suffer much

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greater Hardships? *He* that was ready to give up his Life for the sake of *Christianity*, and to follow his Master thro' all Indignities, and all Persecutions, when the Glory of *God* should call him to it? No, It was something more than his own part in this World which engag'd him to shew himself after this manner; for this he could with the greatest ease have neglected. But the Happiness of *Humane Society*, and the good Estate of the *Inferior part* of Mankind, mov'd his Soul to a generous Indignation against every thing in *Government* which favour'd of *Tyranny*; and kindled in his Breast a Zeal for every thing which it was fit for *Subjects* to enjoy. Let us therefore see if his *Behaviour* will not lead us to some useful, and important Thoughts relating to *Christians* incorporated in *Civil Societies*.

1. I need not take particular notice that *St. Paul* thought it not beneath a *Christian*, and an *Apostle*, to concern himself with his *Rights* and *Privileges*, as He was a *Subject* of the *Roman State*. He knew, as well as any since his time, that He belong'd to a *City* above, whose Builder is *God*; He knew that his chief Concern was *Eternity* and *Heaven*; He knew that no *Tyrannical Magistrate* could rob him of his Innocence, or of his Salvation: and yet He consider'd himself likewise as a Member of *Humane Society*, and acted the part of one who had a just sense of the *Privileges* of his *Citizenship* here on Earth, as well as of that *Citizenship* in *Heaven*, which he speaks of to the *Philippians*, and *Ephesians*. And why should it be thought unworthy of any other *Preachers* of the *Gospel*, to imitate so great an Example, in the same great Concern for the good of *Humane Society*? To proceed,

2. Let *St. Paul* himself answer all those who have, on his Authority, pretended to exalt the *Executive Powers* above all *Laws*: and above the very *Ends* of that Office for which they were instituted. *He*, it is plain, knew nothing of this; nor did He carry the Obligation of a quiet *Submission* to any such instances as were contrary to the *Design* of that Office. Let them learn from himself that when he speaks highly of *Magistrates*, it is of such
who

who are *Gods* indeed in *Humane Society*; such as maintain the Character and Dignity of their Station by answering the Ends of it; and that when they descend to invade the *Privileges* they were ordain'd to guard, He knew no such profound respect to be due to them. Let them Learn from *Him* that the *Laws* of the *Roman State* were above the *Executive Power*; and that the Authority of the *Magistrate* could not make that *Law*, which was against the *written Laws*; or oblige him to comply with what was injurious to his *Civil Privileges*. Let them learn from *Him* that he understood not his *Master's Doctrine* concerning the Governours of this World, to extend beyond the *Privileges* and Happiness of the govern'd *Society*; and that He himself, in his own *Doctrine*, deliver'd in other places, meant nothing contrary to these. Let them learn from his *Practice*, which is certainly the *best Interpreter* of his own *Doctrine*, and that of his *Master* and *Fellow-Apostles*, that when He saith *there is no Power but of God, the Powers that be are ordain'd of God*; and that when his great Master acknowledges the Power of *Pilate* to be from above, no more could be meant, than that it was agreeable to *God's Will* that some Persons should be invested with *Power* for the good of *Humane Society*; not that *God* had made them uncontrollable in acting against his *Commission*, and to the ruine of their *Fellow-Creatures*. Let them learn that when *St. Paul* commanded Respect, and forbid *Opposition* to the *Higher Powers*; and that when *St. Peter* commanded the same Subjection both to the *Supreme* and *Deputed Magistrates*, they were consider'd as acting the best part in the World; and nothing intended by this to oblige *Subjects* to a *Quiet Submission* to such illegal, and unjust *Conduct*, as affects and shakes the *Universal Happiness*. And,

3. If they still repeat the old *Question*, who shall judge of the *Invasion of Privileges*? Let the same *St. Paul* answer them, who in the capacity of a *Subject* more than once is recorded (in the short *History* we have of his *Actions*) to have presum'd to judge concerning his own *Privileges* against the *Invasion* of the *Magistrate*; and to have done this as by a *Right* belonging to every Member

ber of the same *Society*. His *Christianity* did not make him forget that he was a *Roman*: and as a *Roman* he judg'd that he had the Privileges of a *Roman*: and these his *Christianity* did not oblige him to give up to any Mortal, as long as he could with Honour keep them. The Possibility of his mistaking in this, in which he acted not as an *Apostle*, was no Argument to him against this Right: nor did the Weakness of other Men's Judgments prevail with him not to set them an Example of judging in the like Circumstances. What Confusion, what Disorder, say some, must ensue, if *Subjects* be allow'd to judge concerning the Invasion of their own *Rights* and *Privileges*? But let them believe St. Paul for once, that much more Misery must ensue upon *Humane Society*, if it be a settled Point that the *Executive Powers* may absolutely, and without controul, determine what they please concerning the *Inferior* part of the World. If any one ask where he saith this, I answer, his Behaviour speaks it aloud; for he never would have acted the part which he did, could he have thought it more for *Public Good* that *Subjects* should give up all their Judgments to the determination of their *Magistrates*, than that they should judge concerning the Violation of their common *Rights* after the best manner they could. Let not Men therefore forget *Modesty* so much as to laugh out of countenance this Right of judging in *Subjects*, which St. Paul himself claim'd merely as he was a *Subject*.

4. Let those learn it from St. Paul who will not bear it from others, that *Rights* and *Privileges*, *Liberty* and *Property*, and the like, are not *Words* fitted only to raise the Spirits of the *People*, and to foment Disturbances in *Society*; but that they are *Things* worth contending for. Some may think (unless Respect to an *Apostle* a little divert them from it) what great matter if St. Paul had born a little *Scourging*? Or why could not he pass over the Injuries offer'd him by his *Governors*? To which I know no better Answer than this, that his Behaviour was what it was, merely because they were *Magistrates*; i. e. because it was a Case not of Concern to *Himself* only,

only, but to *Humane Society*. For he could bear, and pass by Injuries as well as any Man: and had they been private Persons who had offer'd him the same Indignities, I doubt not, He had born them without any return but that of Forgiveness. But when the *Civil Privileges* of that *Society* to which he belong'd were invaded by those whose Duty and Profession it was to maintain them, He thought it a just Occasion to shew his sense of so great an *Evil*; tho' it immediately touch'd only himself. The consideration of the *Character* and *Office* of those who offer'd the Injuries, was so far from determining him to pass them over with *silence*, (according to some Mens way of arguing) that it was this very thing that made him look upon them not as private Injuries, but with a Resentment due to Injuries of a *Public* and *Universal Concern*. And however some may ridicule the *Liberties* of *Subjects*; *St. Paul*, it is plain, was for standing fast, not only in the *Liberty* with which *Christ* had made him free from the *Jewish Law* of *Ceremonies*; but also in that *Liberty* with which the *Laws of Nature*, and of the *Roman State*, had made him free from *Oppression* and *Tyranny*. For,

5. It is another Observation which we may make from his *Example*, that He thought the *End* of written *Laws* to be the *Security* of the *Subject* against any arbitrary Proceedings of the *Executive Power*; and that this could not be, unless the *Executive* were govern'd by these *Laws*, as well as the *Subject*. If this had not been his Opinion, it had been frivolous for him to have urg'd his *Privileges* founded upon the *Laws*: by urging of which he plainly implies that they were the measure of the *Magistrate's* Behaviour towards the *Subject*. And I hope it is the same in all the like *Establishments*. But how contrary is this to the *Maxims* of some who make the *Laws* insignificant Trifles, and place the *Will* of the *Executive Power* above them; declaring that otherwise there can be no such thing as *Government*? By which Word they generally seem to understand something beyond such a *Government* as is for the good of the govern'd *Society*. How contrary is this to such as make written *Laws* only

only an Encroachment upon the *Absolute Power* instituted by God; and study to make their *Power* as contemptible as they can, that the necessity of *Absolute Monarchy* may the better appear; and boast of their *Services* this way as if they were of the greatest Importance? If these *Notions* be embrac'd, what must be thought of St. Paul under the *Roman State*, who thought it his Happiness to have *Rights* and *Privileges* settled by written *Laws*? What must we think of the wisest *Nations* in former Times, who could devise no greater Security against *Oppression* and *Unhappiness* in *Societies* than *Laws*? And if we come home to our selves, What must we think of the envied *Constitution* under which we live, and, by the virtue and power of *Laws*, all enjoy the chief Happinesses that Humane Life can wish for? What must we think of that *Revolution* in which *High* and *Low* so unanimously joyn'd chiefly to rescue our *Laws* from a *Dispensing Power*; and to devest the *Executive* from all pretences to a Superiority over the *Legislative*? And what must we think of those *Magistrates*, whom the present Age beholds with Veneration, and Ages to come will remember with eternal Honour; who, tho' commissioned by the *Supreme Executive Power*, yet acknowledge no Rule of their Conduct but what is prescrib'd to them by the *Legislative*; and account it their chiefest Glory to be the Guardians of the *Laws*, as they are of the *Liberties* of the *People*?

The judicious Mr. Hooker thinks that *Humane Societies* first made a trial of *Government* by the Will of one Man; (as their first *Essay* might well be the worst and most imperfect;) and that they were constrain'd to come to *Laws* as a Remedy against the *Evils* of that kind of *Regimen*, after they had found (as his *Expression* is) *That to live by one Man's Will was the Cause of all Mens Misery*. This agrees with St. Paul, who plainly thought that *Laws* were a sufficient Curb to the *Arbitrary Will* of the *Executive Power*: But in vain did he contend in his Days; in vain have the wisest of Men discours'd in all Ages; and in vain is *Absolute Power* controll'd by success of Arms

Eccles. Po-
lity Book I.
S. 10.

Arms in our own times, if we can live to be persuaded, either that there is no difference in *Governments*; or that there is no guard in *Laws* against *Arbitrary Power*; nor any force in them but what must bend to the Will of those whose *Office* it is to execute and defend them. A lasting *Liberty* is founded upon *Laws*; and is the result of a good *Constitution* of *Government*, as *Health* is of a right *Constitution* of *Body*. In this also like *Health*, that it is valu'd most by those who know the Taste of it, under the first Apprehension, or Sense of the want of it; but little priz'd by thoughtless Men under a secure and unshaken Enjoyment: whilst *Slavery*, like *Sickness*, to those who never tasted it, seems nothing; and to those who have been oppress'd long enough to forget what *Liberty* is, becomes the more tolerable, as a Bodily *Indisposition* doth to such as know not, or despair of, a better State. But is it not very unaccountable, that *Blessings* should be undervalu'd by weak Men, for that *Security* which should recommend them; nay, that *Curse* should be invited down from *Heaven* in the *name* of them? That when the Inconveniences of *Absolute Monarchy* made Men first fly to *Laws* for refuge, they should ever fly back again from what they must acknowledge their Happiness, and call for that *Absolute Power* to dispense with these *Laws*, which these *Laws* were purposely design'd, and instituted to controul and confine? But thus it is even at this Day, after the Experience of so many Ages; even amongst our selves, after so grateful and pleasing a Taste of the Blessings of a *Legal Constitution*; even under the most uncorrupt, unblameable Administration of *Justice* and *Equity*, that ever any Nation was bless'd with. But, to return,

6. St. Paul's Behaviour should methinks, upon second Consideration, make some Persons a little more cautious of affirming, *Absolute Monarchy*, invested with a Power above all the *Encroachments* of written *Laws*, to be the only Form agreeable to the Will of *God*; nay, if you can hear it without smiling, the most beneficial to the *Subject*. For let any one tell me, whether, upon this Principle, it had not been the *Duty* of St. Paul to have taken

taken the opportunity offer'd him of owning the superior Power of the *Magistrate*; of acknowledging the little use of *Laws* to *Humane Society*; and of shewing the *Christian Religion* to be a great Friend, tho' not to the *lawless Confusion* of the Multitude, yet to the *lawless Power* of the *Magistrate*. This had been a noble piece of Service, not only to *Truth*, but to *Humane Society*, according to some: And I presume *St. Paul* knew the *Will*, and the plain *Revelation* of *God* as well at least as any *Modern Christian*; and would gladly have suffer'd a few *Stripes*, in order to bear testimony to so important a part of *God's Law*. Nor need He have doubted this way to have turn'd the anger of the *Magistrates* into Favour; and a kind regard both to himself and his Profession. But He appears to have been a Stranger to all this: and his Zeal for the *Laws* shews that He thought both the Will of *God*, and the good of *Society*, to require another Scheme than that of an *Unlimited Executive Power*.

Thus have I laid before you a true account of the *Behaviour* and *Notions* of that *Apostle*, in favour of the *Rights* of *Subjects*, who hath been long, and often, represented by many as the greatest Asserter of an *Unlimited Authority* in the *Executive Power*: And tho' I have been treating of *Civil* and *Secular* Concerns, yet I hope I may be safe under the Patronage of *St. Paul's* Example, and of those *Scriptures* which give us this Account of his *Conduct* and *Behaviour*, as of something not unuseful to *Men* and *Christians*. Nor is it a small Satisfaction to speak upon this *Subject* before those who understand the *Value* and *Importance* of *wholesom Laws*; and know how to scorn all the Homage or Respect of Men, but what results from an unbiass'd, and uninterrupted Administration of *Justice*.

And now, if *St. Paul* shew'd so great a Respect to the written *Laws* of that *State* under which He liv'd; If he thought it worth his while (whose grand Affair was to propagate a *New Religion*, and the Belief of a *Future State*) to concern himself so much with this World as to insist upon his *Rights* and *Privileges*, as He was a *Subject*, and to shew no ordinary regard to them; If He thought it the Happiness of

a Kingdom to have such *Privileges* as are fit for *Subjects*, settled by *Law*, and an Happiness not to be shaken at the *Will* of the *Executive Power*; If *He* thought that *Subjects* might judge concerning the Invasion of these *Privileges*, and were not brought into Being to submit to every thing impos'd upon them; Let us learn from so great an Example to value our own Happiness in that *Legal Establishment* under which we live, and live so as to enjoy Life. His Example bids us plainly stand fast in our *Liberty* supported by *Laws*. Let this move us more than the fallacious Disputations of those who are continually declaiming against this Happiness, and endeavouring to persuade us to change it for another sort of *Government*; arguing the *Benefit* of this to our selves, and the *Right* to it in others. And, lest we should not be mov'd to a Change, the Argument is sometimes turn'd, and we are to be inform'd that our whole notion of *Liberty* is a mistaken *Chimera*, and *Nonsense*; that whereas we think we have *Laws* to govern us, it is only the *Will* of the *Executive* which rules; that whereas we think these *Laws* are made by the Consent and *Authority* of the *Representatives* of the *People*, it is no such thing; that it is the *Prince* only who *Enacts*, that no other have any share in the *Legislature*; that it hath all the *Treason* possible in it, to say that the *Parliament* hath a *Coordinate Power* in *Legislation*; that our *Constitution* abhors *Coordinate Legislative Powers*; that our *Constitution* is one *Sovereign*, whose *Supremacy* is indivisible, and both the *Legislative* and *Executive* are in it, notwithstanding that all our *Laws* are said to be *Enacted* not only by the *Prince*, but by the *Authority* of the *Lords* and *Commons*, in the same Sentence; and consequently that the *Executive Power* being the only *Legislative*, can dispense, annul, destroy *Laws* as it pleaseth; that the *People* without distinction are the *Sons of Belial*, a Company of *Vassals*, that live and subsist by the *Concession* of their *Master* only, and the like: Positions which I would not mention, but that they are expos'd to light, and propagated with heat, every Day: Tho', I hope, not with such Force as to disengage our Affections from an Happiness, without which, I know
not

not whether it had not been as well for us to have been born to a Wilderiness and a Den.

As *Laws* therefore have turn'd the *Desert* of this *World* into a *Paradise*, and the Wildness of Mankind into *Humane Society*; so let us of this *Kingdom* acknowledge our part in this Happiness to be much above that of *others*; and let our *Zeal* for it rise in proportion to the Value of the thing it self. Let our *Government* by *Laws* be the chief object of our *Worldly Concern*: and as we value that, let our Value, and Estimation rise for the *Supreme Head*, and every Branch of the *Executive Power*, under which we live so happy and easy at home, whilst they all joyn in making the *Laws* the measure of their whole *Administration*. But above all, let our Thankfulness at this Time rise to the great *Disposer* of all *Events*, who hath given us a farther Prospect of the continuance of the same Happiness to future Generations, by a great and important Victory abroad, in which *Justice*, *Laws*, and *Liberty*, have triumph'd over *Injustice*, and *Arbitrary Power*; and which we may reasonably look upon as a growing Security of our good Estate against the Designs and Attempts of all who Fight against it both at Home and Abroad: Which *God* grant it may be for the sake of *Jesus Christ*, &c.

F I N I S.

